Met Office staff recognised in NY Honours

31 December 2013 - The Met Office's Chief Scientist, Professor Julia Slingo, and Chief Executive, John Hirst, have been recognised in the 2014 New Year Honours list.

Professor Slingo, who was awarded an OBE in 2008, has been made a Dame for her contribution to weather and climate science over a career spanning more than 30 years.

Since joining the Met Office in 2009, she has driven a ground-breaking programme of research to underpin the Met Office's world class weather and climate services which help protect lives and property around the world.

Previously Professor Slingo worked as Director for Climate Research at NERC 's National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS) and was the founding Director of the Walker Institute for Climate System Research at the University of Reading .

She has also notched up some notable firsts, being the UK's first female Professor of Meteorology and the first female President of the Royal Meteorological Society .

Professor Slingo said: "I'm honoured by this recognition, which acknowledges not just my work but also the excellence of Met Office research and those we partner with around the world. The UK has been at the forefront of great advances in this field and, with continued investment, we can continue to lead the way and provide tangible benefits to peoples' lives, to businesses and the wider economy."

Sir Mark Walport, Government Chief Scientific Adviser, offered his congratulations: "Julia works tirelessly to promote the importance of weather and climate science, providing inspirational leadership of science in the Met Office and the wider UK and international community. I offer Julia my wholehearted congratulations."

John Hirst, who has been Chief Executive of the Met Office since 2007, has been awarded a CBE for his contribution to national and international weather services to benefit the public.

During his tenure he has overseen numerous advances in the Met Office's capabilities and service delivery. This includes setting up of the National Hazards Partnership, the Met Office Academic Partnership, a move to providing forecasts for 5000 sites across the UK, release of unprecedented levels of free data, and many others.

The Met Office has also built on close working relationships with research partners and national meteorological services around the world.

Mr Hirst said: "I'm very proud to receive this honour and I feel privileged to be at the helm of the Met Office, which continues to be a benchmark for weather and climate services the world over."

Michel Jarraud, Secretary General of the World Meteorological Organization , said: "I congratulate John on his recognition. His efforts on the international stage to encourage the sharing of expertise, knowledge and best practice have contributed greatly to the work of the World Meteorological Organization and to the development of close relationships with other National Meteorological Services."

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